

Message Text

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ORIGIN EA-09

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 L-03 NSC-05 DLOS-09 OES-07 EB-08
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S/S-O RPERITO

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O 022229Z AUG 77
FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO AMEMBASSY SEOUL IMMEDIATE
CINCUNC IMMEDIATE
CINCPAC IMMEDIATE

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PLOS, KS, KN, US

SUBJECT: PRESS GUIDANCE RE NORTH KOREAN DECLARATION OF
MILITARY SEA ZONE

REFS: (A) CINCUNC 011051Z AUG 77, (B) STATE 179939.

1. FOLLOWING IS PRESS GUIDANCE PREPARED FOR DEPARTMENT
SPOKESMAN FOR UTILIZATION ON IF ASKED BASIS AT NOON
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BRIEFING TUESDAY, AUGUST 2:

QUOTE

Q: WHAT RESPONSE DOES THE DEPARTMENT HAVE TO THE NORTH
KOREAN DECLARATION OF A BROAD MILITARY ZONE CLOSED TO
FOREIGN VESSELS AND AIRCRAFT?

A: WE HAVE NOTED PRESS REPORTS OF THE ANNOUNCEMENT FROM PYONGYANG. THIS IS A UNILATERAL ANNOUNCEMENT AND IN NO WAY CURTAILS OR DIMINISHES THE RIGHTS OR OBLIGATIONS OF THE UNITED NATIONS COMMAND OR THE UNITED STATES IN KOREA, NOR DOES IT DIMINISH THE OBLIGATIONS OF NORTH KOREA UNDER THE ARMISTICE AGREEMENT.

Q: A GROUP OF SOUTH KOREAN ISLANDS OFF THE WEST COAST OF KOREA WOULD FALL WITHIN THE BOUNDARIES OF THE NORTH KOREAN DECLARATION. HAVE YOU ANTICIPATED NORTH KOREAN ATTEMPTS TO INTERDICT THE RESUPPLY OF THESE ISLANDS?

A: AS I HAVE SAID, THE NORTH KOREAN ANNOUNCEMENT DOES NOT CHANGE THE RIGHTS OF THE UN COMMAND.

Q: ARE YOU PLANNING ADDITIONAL PROTECTION FOR THE VESSELS THAT RESUPPLY THESE ISLANDS?

A: UN COMMAND PROTECTION FOR THESE VESSELS IS NORMAL .

Q: HAS THE UN COMMAND DECLARED A HEIGHTENED ALERT STATUS IN LIGHT OF THE NORTH KOREAN ANNOUNCEMENT?

A: NO.

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Q: DO OUR SHIPS OR PLANES TRANSIT THE NEW MILITARY ZONE ON INTELLIGENCE GATHERING MISSIONS?

A: I HAVE NO COMMENT ON INTELLIGENCE OPERATIONS. UNDER INTERNATIONAL LAW, THE U.S. AND OTHER NATIONS EXERCISE THE FREEDOMS OF NAVIGATION AND OVERFLIGHT BEYOND A NARROW TERRITORIAL SEA. WE DO NOT RECOGNIZE THE RIGHT OF ANY NATION UNILATERALLY TO REGULATE NAVIGATION AND OVERFLIGHT ON THE HIGH SEAS.

Q: BUT HAVEN'T THE UNITED STATES AND MANY OTHER NATIONS MADE UNILATERAL DECLARATIONS EXTENDING TO 200 MILES?

A: THE U.S. HAS, ALONG WITH MANY OTHER NATIONS, DECLARED A 200-MILE FISHERIES ZONE ADJACENT TO ITS COASTS. WE DID NOT PURPORT TO CLAIM JURISDICTION WITHIN THE ZONE OVER OTHER MATTERS SUCH AS NAVIGATION, OVERFLIGHT.

Q: THE SOUTH KOREANS HAVE REPORTEDLY SENT A SHIP INTO THE NORTH KOREAN-CLAIMED ZONE TO MAKE CLEAR THAT SEOUL DOES NOT RECOGNIZE NORTH KOREAN JURISDICTION OVER THE AREA. HOW DO YOU VIEW THIS DEVELOPMENT?

A: THE FERRY BOAT TRIP WAS A PREVIOUSLY SCHEDULED VISIT TO CARRY SUPPLIES AND PASSENGERS TO SOUTH KOREAN ISLANDS NEAR THE COAST OF NORTH KOREA.

Q: WHAT ABOUT THE GUNBOATS?

A: ESCORTS ARE A NORMAL PRECAUTION FOR TRIPS TO THIS AREA.

Q: DOES NORTH KOREA ATTEND MEETINGS OF THE LAW OF THE SEA CONFERENCE?

A: YES, BOTH NORTH AND SOUTH KOREA ARE BOTH FULLY ACCREDITED MEMBERS OF THE LAW OF THE SEA CONFERENCE. LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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END QUOTE.

2. PRESS REPRESENTATIVES QUESTIONED SPOKESMAN INTENSIVELY ON THE ISSUE CONCENTRATING ON NORTH KOREAN RIGHTS UNDER INTERNATIONAL LAW TO CLAIM JURISDICTION OVER OFFSHORE ZONE AND WHETHER CLAIMED ZONE ALTERS RIGHTS OF THE ROK OR CHANGES STRATEGIC PICTURE ON THE PENINSULA. SPOKESMAN FOLLOWED GUIDANCE, FENDED OFF QUESTIONS WHICH WERE TOO HYPOTHETICAL AND SAID HE WOULD LOOK INTO QUESTION OF COMMUNICATION WITH NORTH KOREANS VIA MAC CHANNEL. HE ALSO OFFERED TO OBTAIN NAMES OF ISLANDS IN QUESTION.

3. DEPARTMENT INTENDS TO INFORM PRESS OF SUBSTANCE OF MESSAGE PASSED TO NORTH KOREAN REPRESENTATIVE AT JSA AND WILL LIST ISLAND GROUPS AS DEFINED IN ARMISTICE AGREEMENT. CHRISTOPHER

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